

The Virginia Teacher

Published monthly, except June, July, and August, by Madison College at Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Entered as second-class matter March 13, 1920, at the postoffice at Harrisonburg, Virginia, under the act of March 3, 1879.



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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE SCREEN

Summarizing the impact of public opinion on the screen as reflected by responsible group leadership, Mr. Will H. Hays, President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, itemizes the current demands as follows:

For the continuance and increase of those themes and treatments which emphasize "mankind's long struggle for freedom and the hopes and aspirations of free men everywhere";

For the proper emphasis on our own screens of the theme of Americanism "by pictures that present the strongest measure of hope in their portrayal of stories of success attained through initiative, through perseverance and sacrifice, and through the triumph of man's spirit over material obstacles";

For pictures, treated with realism drawn from life, of the problems of the average man and woman among the rank and file of the people. This is already reflected in the increasing number of successful enter-

tainment films, presented in simple terms and without exaggeration;

For pictures, including shorts and travelogues, which dramatize the home life and habits, the customs and the cultures of all nations and races; for pictures that deal with the great figures of all nations, treated with sympathy and fidelity to historical fact. "American pictures," he says, "serve a world audience. They are universal coinage which must be kept sound and undebased;"

For pictures that will meet to an even larger extent our entertainment responsibilities to our sister Americas, "and at the same time help to erase misunderstanding by portraying their history, ideals, and cultural patterns";

For the continuance and development of the short-subject field, particularly of those pictures which re-create for the present generation the great events and stirring scenes of our nation's history.

THE TEACHER'S IMPORTANCE TO AMERICA

"In the last year two Republics have fallen before the advance squadrons of the Nazis... They died—not by bullets, but by infection... For the new and deadly weapon is propaganda... The two fallen nations teach a great military lesson to America... Their fate proves—that unless guarded—a Nation's soul is more vulnerable than its coast line... The poison battalions seek no open measuring of forces... With a snake's cunning they seek to paralyze the nation by injecting hatred and intolerance into its life-stream... And so on the world front our Navy is no longer our first line of defense... Our fleet combat divisions are the public school teachers... And upon each of them descends a sacred duty... For they must forever dispel darkness by giving early light!... They must meet the poison of race hatred with the inoculation of tolerance... They must arm each child invincibly with

the Truth!...For in the light of international events their horizon has enlarged.... The school teachers are no longer merely helping children to develop themselves,... They are fighting in the front line trench—for the LIFE—of the Republic!"—WALTER WINCHELL, *Times-Herald*, March 22, 1939.

THE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK FOR EDUCATION

"The international outlook in education for the coming year, like the international outlook generally, is bad. The greatest enemy of democracy, Germany, will continue to emphasize the doctrines of Aryan superiority and race solidarity.... Splendid teachers... have been driven out of the country on account of race, religion or political beliefs.... Moreover, anti-liberal views on subject-matter, old-fashioned methods of teaching, and rigid discipline have almost everywhere accompanied the appearance of totalitarianism in any country. This is true of the part of Spain under Franco's control, of Japan, and of the new Czechoslovakia.... The next year will probably witness the expulsion of Jewish teachers from the universities of countries hitherto exempt from persecution. The destruction of schools and universities in countries where war will probably continue next year, as in Spain and China, is one of the saddest elements of the educational scene. The destruction of schools and colleges has been immense and it will be many years before those countries can recover from it..."—*Dr. Stephen Duggan*.

THE READING TABLE

OUR CHANGING WORLD. Selected and edited by Sylvia F. Anderson, Martha J. Nix, and Anne E. Windhusen. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1939. 585 pp. \$1.75.

This volume, designed for freshmen in their first semester of writing, offers forty-eight recent essays grouped under five headings (Time, Space, and Man; The Conquest of Earth; Building a Better World; The Arts Today; and the Laboratory of Words

and Ideas). Many of the essays will serve to orient the reader in matters of science, economics, and sociology; those in the last two sections will stimulate his interest in literature and the arts. A great many teaching suggestions are supplied for each such essay, along with numerous exercises in writing.

TWELVE WAYS TO BUILD A VOCABULARY. By Archibald Hart. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1939. 128 pp. \$1.25.

A sprightly little book with twelve chapters suggesting ways to stimulate an interest in words, their derivation, their meaning, their growth, their use and misuse. While Dr. Hart is a little on the cautious side in his attitude toward slang, he restores the book's balance by appreciative recognition of some of the richness of English idiom. Ten challenging vocabulary tests in the spirit of parlor games add to the general appeal this book makes. It deserves a wide use.

C. T. L.

TWENTIETH CENTURY PLAYS: American. Edited by Frank W. Chandler and Richard A. Cordell. Revised. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1939. 295 pp. \$1.40.

Maintaining that the intellectual level of American drama has risen sharply in the last twenty years, the editors offer here as evidence of its Golden Age seven plays by as many authors: O'Neill's *Anna Christie*, Kaufman and Connelly's *Beggar on Horseback*, Rice's *Street Scene*, Connelly's *The Green Pastures*, Howard's *The Silver Cord*, Behrman's *Rain from Heaven*, and Anderson's *Winterset*.

It is a fine assortment, with discerning introductory statements and bibliographies that are admirable for their brevity. The book is compact in format, too, printed on india paper, and less than half an inch thick.

C. T. L.

ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL SCIENCE. By Samuel P. Unzicker and Benjamin C. Gruenberg. Yonker, N. Y.: World Book Co. 1939. 202 pp. Paper covers, 68 cents.

This well-balanced and logically arranged